

Kenneth Stevens, MD

Re: Vote "No" on H.B. 5326; No Assisted Suicide

Dear Committee members:

I am a cancer doctor in Oregon where physician assisted-suicide is legal. I have been following the ongoing attempt to legalize assisted suicide in Connecticut.

I was first exposed to this issue in 1982 shortly before my first wife died of cancer. We had just visited her doctor. As we were leaving, he had suggested that she overdose herself on medication. I still remember the look of horror on her face. She said "Ken, he wants me to kill myself."

In Oregon, the combination of assisted-suicide legalization and prioritized medical care based on prognosis has created a danger for my patients on the Oregon Health Plan (Medicaid). Helpful treatments are often not covered. The Plan WILL cover the patient's suicide. For more detail, please read my affidavit filed on behalf of the Canadian government at <http://maasdocuments.files.wordpress.com/2012/09/signed-stevens-aff-9-18-12.pdf>

Our assisted-suicide law was passed in 1997. In 2000, one of my patients was adamant she would use our law. I stalled her and ultimately convinced her to be treated instead. Nearly fourteen years later she is thrilled to be alive.

Protect your healthcare, yourselves and your families. I urge you to vote "NO" to keep assisted suicide out of Connecticut.

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